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SUBJECT: ARMENIANS REMEMBER HRANT DINK WITH VIGILS, MARCHES
AND RALLIES

11. Bearing signs that read "We are all Hrants," in acknowledgment of similar slogans borne by protesters in Istanbul, several thousand Armenians attended a January 23 memorial gathering for slain Armenian-Turkish journalist Hrant Dink at Yerevan's Freedom Square. Event organizers, a small ad hoc group consisting largely of young diasporan transplants, as well as acquaintances of Dink, spoke in English and in Armenian about the tragedy of his death. Aside from a few signs calling for "genocide" recognition, the portion of the event attended by CDA and Poloff was free of unhelpful rhetoric; none was reported in the local press on January 24, either. CDA was swarmed by cameras and voice recorders within minutes of walking into the crowd at the event, and his comments about the tragedy and hope for normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations were widely broadcast.

12. The event was one of many that have been held in Dink's honor since January 20, including a candlelight vigil and a protest march that ended at the European Union office in downtown Yerevan. Crowds at the first two events, advertised mainly by text message and e-mail, were only in the dozens. The organizers publicized the January 23 gathering on television and radio to increase attendance. Deputy Foreign Minister Gegham Gharibjanian attended the rally; DFM Arman Kirakossian attended Dink's funeral in Istanbul. A march to the "genocide" memorial was planned for January 24 (COMMENT: We suspect this event to be more politicized, given its location. END COMMENT.)
GODFREY